

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-04 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-07

SCI-06 OMB-01 AID-20 DODE-00 PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

AGR-20 L-03 NEA-14 EB-11 H-03 COME-00 DRC-01 /186 W

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R 090706Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3993

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 3507

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SNAR TU

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH MFA SEC GEN EREZ: OPIUM POPPY BAN

REF: (A) ANKARA 3455 (B) STATE 94059 (C) STATE 86717

SUMMARY: IN MAY 8 MEETING WITH MFA SEC GEN ISMAIL EREZ, DURING WHICH WE DISCUSSED NUMBER OF ISSUES REPORTED SEPTELS, WE SPENT CONSIDERABLE TIME COVERING FAMILIAR GROUND ON OPIUM POPPY BAN, WITH EREZ CONTINUING TO USE STANDARD GOT ARGUMENTS. WE DISCUSSED AT LENGTH GOT'S REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF FINAL \$5 MILLION FOR PAYMENTS TO FARMERS, AND I REITERATED TO HIM USG VIEW THAT OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS HAD REACHED AN AGREEMENT ON THE POPPY BAN WHICH WAS BEING BREACHED (REF C). ONLY ENCOURAGING ELEMENT IN OUR CONVERSATION WAS EREZ'S STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT ALTHOUGH THE US MAY NOT THINK SO, DURING THE GOT'S DISCUSSIONS ON THE BAN, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY DID BRING UP ALL THE CONSIDERATIONS WHICH HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. END SUMMARY.

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1. IN BRINGING UP POPPY ISSUE WITH EREZ, I REFERRED TO MY MAY 6 CONVERSATION WITH PRIMIN ECEVIT, DURING WHICH I HAD READ THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, AND REPEATED TO EREZ THAT I WAS DEEPLY WORRIED ABOUT POTENTIAL REACTION BY THE CONGRESS AND AMERICAN PUBLIC IN RESPONSE TO ANY TURKISH REVISION OF THE BAN. I EMPHASIZED THAT I DID NOT THINK GOT YET FULLY COMPREHENDED SERIOUS ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR USG-GOT RELATIONSHIP WHICH WOULD INEVITABLY FLOW FROM ANY REVISION OF THE BAN.

2. EREZ SAID THERE WERE SEVERAL "NEW DEVELOPMENTS" RELATED TO THIS ISSUE HE WOULD LIKE TO CALL TO MY ATTENTION. REFERRING TO REPORTS FROM THE TURKISH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, HE NOTED THAT IN LATE APRIL CONGRESSMAN WOLFF HAD INSERTED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD A STATEMENT REGARDING THE 1915 MASSACRE OF ARMENIANS BY TURKS. HE ALSO REPORTED THAT THERE WAS RENEWED INTEREST IN CONGRESS REGARDING THE PROVISION IN SECTION 606 OF THE 1973 TRADE REFORM ACT CONCERNING THE CUT-OFF OF AID FUNDS TO COUNTRIES NOT COOPERATING IN THE CONTROL OF NARCOTICS TRAFFIC. HE THEN COVERED AT LENGTH THE DAMAGING STATEMENTS IN THE MAY 5 NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE REPORTING THAT THE USG WAS ACTIVELY CONSIDERING A PLAN TO CULTIVATE OPIUM POPPIES IN THE US. (THIS STORY NOW WIDELY REPEATED IN TURKISH PRESS.)

3. IN RESPONSE, AND DRAWING ON REF B, I STATED THAT NEW YORK TIMES STORY WAS NOT TRUE, THAT EMBASSY WAS ISSUING A WRITTEN DENIAL, AND THAT WE WERE CALLING EDITORS OF LEADING TURKISH NEWSPAPERS TO SAY SO. I ASKED HIM TO CONVEY THIS TO PRIME MINISTER. REGARDING ARMENIAN QUESTION, I SAID THIS HAD HISTORICALLY BEEN PROBLEM IN OUR RELATIONS, BUT THAT RELATIVELY FEW CONGRESSMEN WERE INVOLVED IN ISSUE AT PRESENT. BROADER PROBLEM FOR GOT-USG RELATIONS, I ASSURED HIM, WAS WAVE OF REACTION IN CONGRESS LIKELY TO RESULT FROM ANY DECISION TO RESCIND POPPY BAN.

4. WE NEXT REHASHED FAMILIAR ARGUMENTS REGARDING BAN, CONTROL PROBLEM, WORLDWIDE OPIATE SHORTAGE, AND INDIAN PRODUCTIVE, DURING WHICH EREZ CONTINUED TO PRESENT STANDARD PARTY LINE, FLAWS IN WHICH SHOULD BY NOW BE, AT LEAST IN PART, APPARENT TO HIMSELF AND OTHER HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS. I ENDED THIS PORTION OF OUR TALK BY AGAIN EMPHASIZING MY CONCERN THAT THE GOT MAY BE UNDERESTIMATING THE SERIOUS ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR GOT-USG
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RELATIONS WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM RESCINDING THE BAN. THESE CONSEQUENCES COULD JEOPARDIZE THE HEALTH OF US-TURKISH RELATIONS. EREZ SAID IN RESPONSE THAT "WHILE YOU MAY NOT THINK SO", FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAD BROUGHT FORWARD THESE CONCERNS DURING GOT DISCUSSIONS ON POPPY ISSUE, AND HAD POINTED OUT ALL CONSIDERATIONS WHICH HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

5. I THEN TURNED TO THE USG VIEW THAT A VALID BILATERAL AGREE-

MENT RE BAN EXISTED BASED ON THE NEGOTIATING RECORDS. AMBASSADOR HANDLEY'S LETTER TO PRIMIN ERIM OF JULY 1971, AND AMBASSADOR ESENBEL'S NOTE OF SEPTEMBER 1971 (REF C). I EXPRESSED HOPE THAT MFA LEGAL EXPERTS WOULD REVIEW THE RECORD ON THIS QUESTION. EREZ WOULD ONLY RESPOND THAT PRESENT TURKISH GOVERNMENT "DOES NOT BELIEVE THERE IS AN AGREEMENT."

6. EREZ THEN MADE SAME ARGUMENT USED BY PRIMIN ECEVIT(REF A) THAT NO GOVERNMENT WOULD EVER LIMIT ITS SOVEREIGN RIGHT OF DECISION IN A MATTER SUCH AS GROWING OPIUM POPPIES. TAKING ADVANTAGE OF OUR FRIENDSHIP, I SAID THAT SUCH AN ARGUMENT WAS "BALONEY", THAT GOVERNMENTS WERE CONSTANTLY MAKING AGREEMENTS (E.G., TARIFF LIMITATIONS) LIMITING THEIR SOVEREIGN RIGHTS.

7. TURNING TO QUESTION OF COMPENSATION FOR POPPY FARMERS AND GOT'S REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF FINAL \$5 MILLION PAYMENT (REF C), I STRESSED POINT, CLEARLY EXPRESSED IN HANDLEY LETTER, THAT THE KEY ELEMENT IN OUR AGREEMENT TO PAY THE FUNDS WAS THAT THIS MONEY WAS MEANT TO HELP IN THE TRANSITION FROM GROWING TO NOT GROWING. UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, WHEN WE ARE ON NOTICE BAN MAY BE RESCINDED, THE TURKISH REQUEST PUTS US IN A VERY DIFFICULT SITUATION VIS-A-VIS THE CONGRESS AND THE GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE, AND I DID NOT THINK WE COULD TRANSFER THE FINAL \$5 MILLION TO THE GOT, AS REQUESTED. EREZ REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD HAVE A VERY BAD EFFECT WHEN HE REPORTED IT. HE ADDED THAT THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT WOULD OF COURSE HAVE TO GO AHEAD WITH THE PAYMENTS FROM ITS OWN FUNDS. HE THEN NOTED THAT IMPLICATIONS OF WHAT I HAD JUST SAID WERE TRUE, USG MIGHT SOMEDAY ASK FOR REPAYMENT OF ALL FUNDS PREVIOUSLY TRANSFERRED TO GOT PURSUANT TO \$35 MILLION PLEDGE. I DID NOT DENY THIS, LIMITING MY RESPONSE TO THE COMMENT THAT IT WAS BEST TO FOCUS ON OUR PROBLEM OF TODAY (THE \$5 MILLION) WITHOUT TURNING ALSO TO PROBLEMS
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